

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached New Sheet includes new FIG. 4D.

Attachment: New Sheet

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed on July 21, 2005. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because, according to the Office Action, they do not show limitations in claims 82, 83 and 85. Applicants thank Examiner Pham for the courtesy extended during the telephone interview of October 18, 2005, during which the particulars of this objection were discussed. Examiner Pham noted that the following limitations were objected to: “wherein said at least one brace comprises a plurality of braces” in claim 82; “wherein said plurality of braces form a lattice support structure” in claim 83; and a “plurality of braces transversely extending between the vertical surfaces of at least two of the microstructures” in claim 85.

Applicants are submitted herewith new Figure 4D that illustrates exemplary embodiments of structures recited in claims 82, 83 and 85, and described in the specification. The specification has been amended to refer to the new figure. As discussed in the previous paper filed by the Applicants on May 24, 2005, the subject matter is fully supported by the as-filed specification. For example, the specification discloses that “it is also possible to provide more than one dielectric brace layer where they intersect at a container (or containers) such that a two-dimensional network or lattice of dielectric brace layers is formed through-out the array of containers.” Specification, page 8, lines 25-28. New Figure 4D is substantially a copy of Figure 4C as originally filed, with added features illustrating an example of subject matter discussed above.

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 23, 28, 39, 44, 78-83 and 85 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Liu et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,037,216 (“Liu”). Reconsideration is respectfully requested in for the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to further distinguish over Liu. Amended claim 1 recites a “semiconductor substrate; a plurality of microstructures formed over the substrate; a brace transversely extending between lateral sides of at least two of the free-standing

microstructures; and a vertical space between said brace and said semiconductor substrate.”

Thus, amended claim 1 is allowable for similar reasons claims 10 and 84 are allowed, as indicated by the Office Action. Liu fails to teach or suggest the limitations of amended claim 1. There is no “vertical space” between Liu’s layer 33, which is compared to the claimed “brace” by the Office Action, and the substrate. For at least this reason claim 1 is allowable over Liu.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 13 depend from claim 1 and incorporate every limitation of claim 1. Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 13 are allowable for the same reasons as for allowance of claim 1, and also because the unique combinations recited in the dependent claims are neither taught nor suggested by Liu.

Independent claims 23, 28, 39, 44, 78, 81 and 85 have been amended similarly to the amendment made to claim 1. Amended claims 23, 28, 39, 44, 78, 81 and 85 distinguish over Liu for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, and are therefore in condition for allowance. Claims 82 and 83 depend from claim 81 and should be allowed for the same reasons as for allowance of their base claim, and for other reasons. For example, Liu fails to teach or suggest that the “plurality of braces form a lattice support structure” as recited in claim 83.

Claim 79 has been amended to recite “at least one brace transversely extending between lateral sides of at least two microstructures on a semiconductor substrate, wherein said at least two microstructures are supported only by said at least one brace, wherein said at least one brace comprises one material layer.” As discussed with Examiner Pham during the telephone interview of October 18, 2005, Liu fails to teach or suggest this limitation. Rather, Liu teaches multiple layers (e.g., 13, 20, 32, 60), each comprising different materials, over the substrate. For at least this reason, amended claim 79 is allowable over Liu. Claim 80 has been similarly amended, and is also in condition for allowance.

Claim 77 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Liu in view of Findley, U.S. Patent No. 6,243,653 (“Findley”). Reconsideration is respectfully

requested. Claim 77 has been amended to recite that “there is a vertical space between said brace and said semiconductor substrate.” As discussed above with respect to claim 1, Liu fails to teach or suggest this limitation. Findley adds nothing to remedy Liu’s deficiency with respect to amended claim 77. Thus, claim 77 is in condition for allowance.

On a separate matter, Applicants respectfully request that withdrawn claim 4 be examined in the application. In the Response to Election of Species Requirement filed on December 3, 2004, Applicants elected the Embodiment of Figure 6E, but omitted claim 4 from the list of claims readable on the elected embodiment. Claim 4 is readable on the elected embodiment of Figure 6E. Claim 4 depends from claim 1 and should be allowed for the same reasons claim 1 is allowable. Moreover, claim 4 recites that “the brace has a width approximately equal to or less than the largest cross-sectional dimension of the microstructures.” This feature of the invention, discussed on page 9, lines 1-6 of the specification, for example. Claim 4 is believed to be allowable because the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest that the “brace has a width approximately equal to or less than the largest cross-sectional dimension of the microstructures.”

In view of the above remarks, Applicants believe that the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Thomas J. D'Amico

Registration No.: 28,371

Peter A. Veytsman

Registration No.: 45,920

DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN &

OSHINSKY LLP

2101 L Street NW

Washington, DC 20037-1526

(202) 785-9700

Attorney for Applicant

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